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## COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-6035

ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

February 25, 2019

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PAUL ARCANGELI, STAFF DIRECTOR

The Honorable Patrick M. Shanahan  
Acting Secretary of Defense  
U.S. Department of Defense  
1000 Defense, Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Shanahan:

We write to express our concern about President Trump's intent to use Department of Defense funds to construct a wall along the southern border. As the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Readiness Subcommittee, we fear that reprogramming funding intended for military construction projects and counterdrug activities will come at the expense of troop readiness and Department-wide efforts to address the military's aging infrastructure.

In 2018, Defense officials testified before Congress that the Department had a \$116 billion facility maintenance backlog and that 23% of the department's facilities were in poor condition, with 9% in failing condition. As you know, there is approximately \$23 billion of unobligated appropriations currently in the military construction account. These funds were requested by the Department of Defense, authorized and appropriated with bipartisan support by Congress, and signed into law by the President for specific military construction projects. These investments should go to supporting new weapon systems, replacing aging facilities, and improving the readiness and quality of life of our troops and their families as originally intended. Further, with roughly \$1 billion appropriated to the Department's drug interdiction and counter-drug activities account for FY19, the Department will need to reprogram funds from other accounts and priorities to reach the \$2.5 billion sought by the President. It remains unclear where these remaining funds will come from, and we have serious concerns about the impact any reprogramming may have on readiness.

We respectfully request you provide the following information by Friday, March 1<sup>st</sup>:

- When will Congress receive the 2808 notification specifying the military construction projects that will be deferred, and how will this impact these projects' proposed construction timelines?

The Honorable Patrick M. Shanahan

Acting Secretary of Defense

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- Given that the authority provided in 10 U.S.C. § 2808 is predicated on being used for projects that are “necessary to support such use of the armed forces,” please provide the justification for using these funds for the wall, explaining in detail how fencing or a border wall is necessary to support our armed forces.
- Given that the authority provided in 10 U.S.C. § 284 is predicated on fences to “block drug smuggling corridors,” please provide the justification for using these funds for the wall, explaining in detail how the location is a drug smuggling corridor and fencing is necessary.
- When will Congress receive the 284 notification, specifying the sources of funds (up to \$2.5B) that will be reallocated in support of counterdrug activities under 10 U.S.C. § 284?

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



John Garamendi  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Readiness



Doug Lamborn  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Readiness